

## CHAPTER 6. AIRCREW DESIGNATED EXAMINER (ADE) PROGRAM

### SECTION 1. GENERAL

**411. GENERAL.** This chapter contains information concerning aircrew designated examiner (ADE) programs and guidance to be used by principal operations inspectors (POI) and managers when evaluating an operator's request for an ADE program. Section 1 contains a general description of the ADE program. Section 2 contains guidance for the management of an ADE program. Section 3 contains guidance on the selection, training, and supervision of aircrew program designees (APD).

**413. ADE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.** The primary objective of an ADE program is to make effective use of available inspector resources for airman certification and for surveillance of Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 121 and FAR Part 135 operators.

*A. Effective Use of Inspector Resources.* The ADE program is effective when the inspector is relieved from certification activities in order to perform oversight and management functions more efficiently; and when the designated examiner maintains the standards set by the inspector. The program requires that assigned inspectors gain close knowledge of the operator's aircraft, manuals, procedures, management personnel, and training programs. Surveillance is an integral part of the assigned inspector's everyday activities and is supplemented by planned inspections by geographic surveillance units. Desirable levels of compliance with airman certification requirements, operating regulations, and safe operating practices are maintained through a close working relationship between the inspector and the operator's Designated Examiner.

*B. Airman Training and Certification.* The ADE program is a means of assuring the continued qualification and proficiency of airmen trained and certified in a specific operator's training program.

*C. Safe Operating Practices.* The ADE program is a means of continuously monitoring the operator's flight operations and training programs to detect and correct (with the operator's cooperation) potential problems which could adversely affect safety.

**415. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.** The ADE program was originally established under the provisions of FAR Part 183 for the purpose of delegating certification authority and activity to select employees of FAR Part 121 and FAR Part 135 operators. The program was designed for those operators with sophisticated training capabilities and programs that includes the extensive use of flight simulators and flight training devices, highly trained personnel, and a large volume of certification activity. Eligibility requirements have since been relaxed to permit smaller air carriers to take advantage of the benefits of an ADE program. The ADE program was and still is based on the premise that a candid relationship must be maintained between the operator and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The program is comprised of (1) an operator's check airman, further authorized by the FAA as aircrew program designees (APD) to conduct certification on behalf of the administrator; and (2) FAA inspectors, known as Aircrew Program Managers (APM) who oversee the APD's activities. Both APD's and APM's are selected for their experience, knowledge, and professional standing, in the interest of maintaining high certification standards. An APD candidate is selected from the ranks of the operator's proficiency check airmen and is given training in FAA policies and certification procedures before being designated as an APD (see section 3 of this chapter). An APM candidate is selected for knowledge and experience related to airman certification and air carrier training programs. Before being assigned APM duties, an APM is trained by the operator to qualify as a pilot-in-command (PIC) and as a fully-qualified check airman in one of the operator's aircraft. If the ADE program for an aircraft includes designated flight engineer examiners (DFEE), the APM is trained by the operator to qualify as a flight engineer. An APM maintains effective quality control over the operator's programs by leveraging knowledge of the operator to correct deficiencies and encourage high performance.

**417. GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING AN ADE PROGRAM.** POI's, certificate-holding district office (CHDO) managers, and regional flight standards division (RFSD) managers should consider

establishing an ADE program when doing so would benefit the operator, the FAA, or both parties.

A. *Certification Activity.* Circumstances vary widely from operator to operator, and each situation must be considered separately to determine if establishing an ADE program is beneficial to the FAA and to the operator. Many factors should be considered such as multiple crew domiciles, travel time to and from training sites, the complexity of the operator's aircraft, and the complexity of the operator's type of operation. For example, an operator's entry into international operations may argue for an ADE program, even though fewer than 40 certification actions per year occur in that aircraft type. As a guideline, 40 complete airman certification or type rating actions on a specific aircraft type annually is usually sufficient activity to justify establishing an ADE program. The number 40 has been established because it roughly approximates 1 year of work for an inspector.

B. *New or Added Aircraft Type.* An ADE program may be practical and efficient when a new aircraft or a new derivative of existing aircraft is introduced. APM training provided by the operator affords timely appropriate training for the FAA inspector having oversight responsibility. This training in turn enables the FAA to provide good service to the operator in reviewing, approving, and overseeing the operators training program. Also, it allows the APM to establish an effective surveillance program.

C. *Future Requirements.* When inspectors evaluate the need for an ADE program, future requirements must be considered. For example, when an operator introduces a new aircraft into service, the FAA often experiences an exceptionally high demand for airman certification work and a need for expert surveillance of operations with that aircraft during the first few years that the aircraft is operated. In such cases the operator may often benefit by FAA anticipating the need and being ready for an ADE program as the aircraft is entered into service.

- CHDO and RFSD managers electing to create an APM position should ensure that the APM is selected and that the APM position is filled

in time for the selectee to attend initial cadre training.

- It is particularly important that the APM selectees attend initial cadre training together with the operator's employees; the APM selectee participate in Flight Standardization Board (FSB) deliberations concerning type rating and training program requirements.

**419. OPERATOR QUALIFICATION FOR AN ADE PROGRAM.** In order to qualify for participation in an ADE program, an operator must be an FAR Part 121 or Part 135 operator, and should have at least one year of experience of operating with an approved FAR Part 121, Appendix H advanced simulator training program, or the equivalent. The operator must have an acceptable history of compliance with the FAR and safe operating practices, and must have sustained a good working relationship with the FAA. Operators requesting participation in an ADE program must commit to the following:

- Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). An MOU is a written agreement between the operator and the FAA which specifies how the ADE program is to be conducted. In particular, an MOU must specify: (1) that the operator may have the benefit of APD's for a program, and (2) in return, the operator shall provide initial and recurrent training at the operator expense to an APM (or the APM's representative) who will oversee that program and supervise APD activities.
- To extend privileges and courtesies to the APM beyond those extended to aviation safety inspectors (ASI) other than APM's (These privileges must include all privileges that the operator grants to its own check airmen, except that of acting as PIC of an aircraft in flight. For example, an APM must be granted the same authority to operate the controls of flight simulators and flight training devices that the operator grants to its own check airmen.)

**420. - 430. RESERVED.**

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